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Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation

Human resources challenges within the United Nations development system at the country level

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report, prepared in collaboration with the organizations of the United Nations system and the International Civil Service Commission, is submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 62/208, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report identifying human resources challenges within the development system at the country level and formulating recommendations for improvements.

The report focuses on how the United Nations system can best meet the demands of programme countries at the country level, while recognizing the differences and unique requirements in various country situations. Aligning the capacities of the United Nations system to respond to national priorities is an overarching challenge, which requires an integrated approach to mobilize adequate human resources to support country-level efforts. The report also outlines challenges related to the recruitment and career management of United Nations system staff. Those include a range of issues affecting resident coordinators and other United Nations system staff at the country level and are being addressed through comprehensive human resource policies. A number of challenges are also associated with dealing with multiple human resources policies and procedures across the United Nations system.

* E/2009/100.

** The delay in the submission of the present report was due to extensive consultations with various organizations.

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The United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination plan of action for the harmonization of business practices and the ongoing reform of United Nations contractual status constitute steps in the right direction. Yet another challenge relates to facilitating interagency and geographical mobility. The report also addresses the issues of ensuring staff security, planning for the succession of retiring staff members as well as the need to ensure equal representation of women. A few recommendations are put forward for the consideration of the Economic and Social Council.

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Definitions of terms[a]

- **Staff**. All persons appointed by an organization as staff members within the meaning of its staff regulations and rules for a period of one year or more. The term thus excludes all staff members appointed for shorter periods and those persons who are employed under special contractual arrangements. The CEB compendium does not cover the National Professional Officers, which are covered by another statistical compendium. It does not cover non-staff and other types of employees such as consultants, and service contract personnel.
- **"Professional"** includes, under the staff rule, all staff in the Professional category proper, as well as in the Principal Officer and Director category and in higher level posts (Assistant Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General or similar title and executive head) and, in some organizations, Project Personnel. In the present report, Professionals include internationally recruited Professional staff.
- **"General Service"** includes all staff in the General Service category as well as, in some organizations, Manual Workers, staff in the Security Service category, Language Teachers and Field Service staff. Language Teachers and Field Service staff in the United Nations do not belong either to the Professional or General Service categories, although staff at the Field Service level and above have functions and responsibilities which are comparable to those of the Professional category.
- **Appointment**. Act by which a person enters into an employment contract with an organization (with a letter of appointment), according to the staff rules of that organization. Appointments are divided into: (a) those without time limit, which cover permanent, career, indefinite and probationary appointments; and (b) those of a defined duration or fixed-term.
- **Established office**. Any office where units of an organization's secretariat are maintained on a continuing basis. Established offices are divided into headquarters and other established offices, the latter including regional, subregional, area, branch and liaison offices.
- **Grade**. The designation normally assigned to levels within the Professional and higher categories and all staff above the D-2 level come under the grade of UG (ungraded). Grades in the General Service and related categories are not shown in the tables, because not all organizations report this information.
- **Organizational location**. Any location to which an organization assigns its staff, whether an established office or a technical cooperation project.
- **Project**. Refers to a location where staff are assigned for a defined period to assist a Member State in carrying out a programme of technical cooperation.

[a] Based on the United Nations system Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) Compendium on System-Wide Human Resources Statistics.

I. Introduction

1. The capacity of the United Nations system to help countries to address effectively the full range of development challenges is closely related to the adequacy of its human resources. The General Assembly has repeatedly underscored that human resources within the United Nations system at the country level should be adequate to support national development efforts and evolving priorities. This issue was underscored by Member States in paragraph 123 of General Assembly resolution 62/208 on the 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system in which the Assembly reiterated the need for "the range and level of skills and expertise assembled by the United Nations system at the country level to be commensurate with that needed to deliver on the priorities specified in each country's United Nations Development Assistance Framework or country programme documents, in line with the national development strategies and plans, including poverty reduction strategy papers, where they exist, and to correspond to the technical back stopping and capacity-building needs and requirements of developing countries".

2. The diverse and unique situations in programme countries, their evolving development priorities and the fast changing development challenges require that the capacity of the United Nations system in the countries be regularly adjusted so that its operational support remains fully aligned with countries' own priorities and policies for development. To that end, the United Nations system needs to implement policies related to workforce planning, development and reprofiling, as well as to facilitate mobility and redeployment of staff at the global, regional and country levels.

3. Reform of the human resources frameworks of the United Nations has been high on the agenda of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Secretary-General's proposed human resources framework was largely endorsed by the General Assembly in its recent resolution on human resource management (resolution 63/250). In fact, all organizations of the United Nations system are reforming their human resources framework policies and have in place the main elements of a high-performing human resources management. Efforts are being made to develop a common approach to human resources management. The limitation in financial resources, notably core resources, however, has an impact on the breadth and pace of these reforms.

4. The present report responds to paragraph 125 of General Assembly resolution 62/208, in which the Assembly "stressed the need for the United Nations development system to adopt comprehensive policies and strategies for human resources and workforce planning and development", and in that regard requested the Secretary-General "to prepare a report identifying human resources challenges within the United Nations development system at the country level and formulating recommendations for improvements".

5. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2008/2, also requested that the report be prepared in consultation with the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and cover issues related to "interagency staff mobility, re-profiling and redeployment of staff, as well as training and skills upgrading, notably at the United Nations System Staff College at Turin, Italy". The General Assembly, in paragraph 126 of resolution 62/208, had requested the Secretary-General

to continue and intensify efforts in these areas through the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB).

6. The report also responds to the request by the General Assembly in paragraph 94 of resolution 62/208, for the Secretary-General to report on efforts by the United Nations system to improve the selection and training process of resident coordinators at the 2009 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council.

7. The present report should be read in conjunction with the 2008 and 2009 reports of the Secretary-General on the functioning resident coordinator system, including its costs and benefits (E/2008/60 and E/2009/__) as well as with the report on the results achieved and measures and processes implemented in follow-up to General Assembly resolution 62/208 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (E/2009/__).

II. A diverse and increasingly field-based workforce

A. Diversity of United Nations system personnel

8. The workforce of the United Nations development system includes both international/expatriate and locally recruited staff members. The United Nations system also employs a range of personnel who are not staff members but work under special contractual arrangements or for short periods of time. Locally hired non-staff personnel work under very different conditions compared to international and national Professional staff. The present report focuses largely on staff members of organizations of the United Nations system, although where most relevant, reference is made to locally hired personnel.

B. Deployment of staff to programme countries

9. Between 2004 and 2007, the number of international staff members[1] serving with the organizations of the United Nations common system increased by 33 per cent. Most of the increase was in the field. During the period 2004-2007, the number of staff in other than headquarters-established offices expanded by 31 per cent for the Professional and above category and by 96 per cent for the General Service Staff category.[2]

10. At the end of 2007, the majority of United Nations development system's staff is located in the field in country or other established offices. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF),

[1] In the statistical analysis of the present report, the CEB definitions of terms listed at the beginning of the report were used.

[2] Chief Executives Board for Coordination, High-level Committee on Management, personnel statistics data, as at 31 December 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007. Unless indicated otherwise, the statistical data used for the report is from the annual compendium on system-wide human resource statistics compiled by CEB, available from http://hr.unsystemceb.org/statistics. Statistics represent the situation as at 31 December of each year. The compendium is used for the purpose of cross-organizational comparison. Thus, individual agency may have more updated statistics which may not be reflected in this report. The set of definitions used by CEB appears at the beginning of the report. The data does not cover the National Professional Officers.

the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the World Food Programme (WFP) have deployed more than 70 per cent of their staff to field locations. Field level and project personnel account for a majority of the staff members of WHO (68 per cent) and ILO (58 per cent). In contrast, 98-99 per cent of IFAD staff is serving at headquarters. The majority of the staff of UNIDO, UNESCO and FAO serves at their respective headquarters (see table 1). The lower percentage of staff of some specialized agencies in field locations aims at maintaining a balance between their global policy and normative work, on the one hand, and their operational work, on the other.

Table 1
Field presence of selected United Nations Development Group organizations, as at 31 December 2007

Organization	*Number of headquarters staff*	*Headquarters staff as a percentage of total staff*	*Number of staff at other headquarters-established offices (Field)*	*Number of project staff*	*Field and project staff as a percentage of total staff*
UNDP	864	16%	4 487	0	84%
UNICEF	862	14%	5 089	0	86%
UNFPA	314	24%	987	0	76%
WFP	843	22%	3 074	0	78%
WHO	1 769	33%	2 596	1 068	68%
IFAD	504	98%	8	0	1%
UNESCO	1 382	64%	773	0	36%
FAO	2 013	60%	970	354	40%
UNIDO	509	76%	89	68	23%
ILO	967	42%	646	706	58%

Source: Chief Executives Board for Coordination, High-level Committee on Management, personnel statistics data as at 31 December 2007.

C. Policies to deploy staff to the field

11. Various organizations of the United Nations system have been increasing the number of field offices and the number of staff in these offices as a way to respond to the needs of recipient countries in a timely and efficient manner.

Box 1
Field mobility policy of UNIDO

UNIDO introduced a field mobility policy in 2006. The policy provides a framework for managing career staff in field offices and ensuring rotation of staff between field duty stations as well as between field and headquarters. As of December 2008, the representation of Professional staff in field offices had increased by 55.6 per cent since the policy was introduced in 2006.

12. Policies to deploy staff to the field have in some cases been part of broader reforms of the organizations. In UNFPA, for instance, the 2008 reorganization entailed not only the strengthening of field offices but also the establishment of regional and subregional offices and a restructuring at headquarters. The reform of UNDP during the period 2000-2003 supported country offices while better harmonizing their operations and structures with the new overall reform of UNDP.

13. Deploying staff to the field often means strengthening not only country offices but also regional offices. Funds and programmes and some agencies such as WHO have a two-tier structure at the field level, comprising country and regional offices. Other major agencies such as FAO, UNESCO and ILO have a three-level field structure, made up of country, subregional and regional offices.

III. Human resource challenges

14. The present section identifies six challenges faced by the United Nations system in the area of human resources which should be taken into account in designing comprehensive human resources policies and strategies. The first, aligning United Nations system capacities to respond to national priorities, is overarching. The others relate to the recruitment and career management of United Nations system staff; dealing with the multiple human resources policies and procedures across the United Nations system; planning for succession of retiring staff members; ensuring staff security; and securing equal representation of women.

A. The overarching challenge of aligning United Nations system capacities to respond to national priorities

15. Each country requires a different mix of capacities from United Nations country teams. These demands evolve over time. Least developed countries face a broad range of challenges often spanning the whole development agenda. The demands of middle-income countries are different from those of least developed countries. Focus areas may include addressing pockets of poverty and inequality, addressing environmental challenges, mobilizing new technologies, developing macroeconomic or trade policies as well as ways of engaging in international governance mechanisms. The evolution and the growing use of national capacities may increase the need for support in the area of policy advice as compared to other more traditional areas.

16. In order to provide adequate support to the developing countries, the staff of the United Nations system must have technical skills in a broad range of areas. It also must be able to respond to the emergence of new needs. For instance, the convergence of the global financial economic crisis, the volatility of food and fuel prices and climate change challenges the United Nations system to provide adequate support to programme countries. Skills related to managing humanitarian crises and to conflict resolution are also increasingly important. The limited availability of core resources hinders the ability of the United Nations system to adjust its human resources capacities.

17. The present section highlights (a) the growing demand for policy advice; (b) the changing needs of countries; and (c) the importance of taking an integrated approach to human resources at the country level.

1. Responding to the growing demand for policy advice

18. The General Assembly, in paragraph 124 of resolution 62/208, encouraged the organizations of the United Nations development system to take all necessary measures in their human resources policies to ensure that United Nations staff involved in operational activities at the country level have the skills and expertise required for effective management, policy advisory and other capacity development work, in line with national development priorities and plans.

19. Overall, there appears to be a growing demand by programme countries for policy advice, advocacy and other "upstream activities" aside from those related to the management of programmes. United Nations country teams need to be equipped to help Governments in developing strategies to meet the Millennium Development Goals and reduce poverty. Very broadly speaking, this requires skills in areas such as sectoral and macro-level analysis, economic and social policy, strategic planning, and finance. The resident coordinators' annual reports in 2005 noted that United Nations country teams required further support in those areas.

20. These needs were also highlighted more recently in the assessments of the United Nations capacity conducted in six of the eight "Delivering as One" pilot countries (Albania, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, United Republic of Tanzania and Viet Nam). These capacity assessments crystallized the opinions of Governments, United Nations officials and other development partners that there is considerable need for strengthening the policy and technical advisory functions of the United Nations system organizations so that they can become more effective partners in support of national priorities. A shift from programme management to more upstream and specialized areas of technical advisory support is envisaged. However, in some countries, the need remains for a greater strengthening of national capacities in essential governance-related functions such as planning and programming, and for the United Nations continue to provide programme management support.

21. As a result of this assessment, Rwanda, for instance, will closely monitor the capacity of national authorities to assume programme management, while developing a comprehensive human resources plan to gradually shift United Nations capacities towards policy advice. The United Republic of Tanzania, on the other hand, is already developing a human resources strategy for shifting capacity from programme management to policy advice.

22. The General Assembly, in paragraphs 36 and 39 of resolution 62/208, stressed that national capacity development is a core function of the United Nations. It also called upon United Nations organizations to adopt measures that will ensure sustainability in national capacity-building activities and to use to the fullest extent possible national execution and expertise. The United Nations Development Group has developed a position statement and a methodology on capacity development. There is now need for ensuring that the United Nations system staff have the knowledge and skills to adequately support the development of national capacities. Some further knowledge and skills development may be needed in this regard.

2. Mobilizing human resources to respond to the changing needs of countries

Preparation of new United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks

23. In the next three years, approximately 90 countries are expected to start their UNDAF formulation process, starting with approximately 15 countries in 2009. UNDAFs are essential for increasing coherence, effectiveness and relevance of United Nations operations at the country level, as reiterated in General Assembly resolution 62/208. An appropriate combination of programming and substantive analytical skills is needed to support the preparation of these new UNDAFs. Common services and harmonization of business practices should be promoted in order to improve the effectiveness and relevance of United Nations operational activities in addressing national priorities. While specific training is provided to the United Nations country teams concerned, it is also important that the United Nations country presence is equipped in results-based management, change management and other specializations to support the development of UNDAF.

24. Expertise in cross-cutting areas such as gender and capacity development becomes particularly critical when UNDAFs are being prepared and it may be necessary to augment the capacities of country offices in these areas.

25. Considerable thought is being put into the most cost-effective way to support the preparation of new UNDAFs, including from within existing staff and additional capacities outside current staff resources.

Rapid deployment of capacities in situations of emergency and transition from relief to development

26. In the aftermath of a crisis, United Nations system organizations need to rapidly deploy additional capacities (surge capacities) for early recovery and recovery activities to reinforce the work done by humanitarian personnel to support quick delivery of basic services. The United Nations system has responded to such situations by mobilizing standing and standby capacities maintained by entities across the United Nations system, working in close consultation with national and United Nations actors.[3]

27. The United Nations Development Group, through the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office, has both provided technical support and posted strategic planning specialists in the countries to help United Nations country teams to develop strategies in situations of emergency or transition from relief to development. In 2008, 21 resident coordinators benefited from this assistance.

28. The United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office has dedicated significant resources to enhance capacity in resident coordinators offices in 19 transition countries, enabling the hiring of 38 short- and long-term staff. During 2008, these staff contributed to the development of UNDAFs, elaboration and operationalization of recovery strategies; design and implementation of integrated approaches and structures; and development of joint programmes and of projects for the Peacebuilding Fund.

[3] "Standing capacities" are staff whose conditions of service require that they deploy rapidly to meet urgent requirements. "Standby capacities" include rosters of pre-vetted candidates ready to deploy rapidly to serve as staff members of the United Nations system.

29. UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP either have put in place or are in the process of putting in place "surge" capacities to enable quick response to emergency and post-conflict situations. WFP, for example, is developing a scenario to enable the organization to respond to four simultaneous emergencies.

30. In UNICEF, experienced and qualified personnel are identified and deployed within 10 weeks of an emergency. An integrated web-based roster consolidates data on available staff resources to provide better support during emergencies. UNICEF also uses standby arrangements with external partners. UNDP, through its SURGE project, has identified pools of staff for deployment to crisis locations. The candidates go through rigorous assessment and training prior to deployment.

31. Efficient recruitment processes have to be put in place to enable organizations to respond rapidly and effectively to situations of transition from relief to development. In some countries, expert capacities will be required in very specific areas, beyond the ones usually required in these kinds of situations, such as those related to the delivery of basic services, for instance. Contingency planning is needed to anticipate such possible needs.[4] As most organizations of the United Nations system are now called upon to help countries in emergency and post emergency transition situations, new skills related to conflict analysis and resolution, peacebuilding and support for national reconciliation and recovery as well as expertise in disaster preparedness and response might be necessary. Such skills have to be taken into account in recruiting and training personnel.

32. It is also important to provide a support and compensation system recognizing the needs of staff in non-family duty stations. The Special Operational Approach applied by UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR and UNICEF enables staff members and holders of short-term appointments to manage the costs associated with family separation and provides incentives to attract the most appropriate staff to these assignments.

33. Overall, the United Nations system still needs to become faster in responding to the changing needs of developing countries. The limited availability of core funding, the inadequate strategic capacity of some organizations, and the rigidities in human resources procedures and practices may be among the factors hindering more rapid responses.

34. An example of rapid response, however, is the capacity recently put in place by UNDP to help countries to react to the economic crisis. UNDP has initiated an online platform that brings together advisers, global experts, consultants and practitioners to support countries impacted by the economic crisis. The goal is to provide national partners with the guidance, resources and people that can help them to monitor the impact of the crisis, reach the newly vulnerable or make decisions about how to use more limited resources.

[4] See the report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict (to be issued).

3. Developing an integrated approach to human resources needs at the country level

The importance of an integrated approach

35. The structure of the United Nations presence in each country, and the related human resources and skills, continue to be addressed on an agency-by-agency basis. United Nations funds, programmes and agencies deploy staff to country offices in accordance with their respective programmes, traditions, mandates and business models, and in light of whether or not the particular programme or projects being pursued by the organization necessitates resident technical advice.

36. The human resources deployed at the country level should instead be seen in the context of a joint response of the United Nations system to the priorities of the programme countries, developed in close consultation with national actors. The 2005 Joint Inspection Unit report entitled "Some measures to improve overall performance of the UN system at the country level", pointed out that, today, with the common country assessment and UNDAF and the national poverty reduction strategies, it should be easier than in the past to project the overall capacity needs of the programme country and the corresponding skills profile of the United Nations system in the country. Increased and more coherent joint programming is helping to move in that direction. Continuing efforts should be made to respond to the country's views on the nature and modality of United Nations system collaboration which would best support its priorities, as recommended in paragraph 101 of General Assembly resolution 62/208.

37. The capacity of the United Nations system in the country thus has to be determined in the light of the priorities of the country as well as in the light of the environment in which the United Nations operates. This implies taking into consideration the overall socio-economic and policy environment, as well as the internationally agreed development goals, the impact of the international situation on the country, and the aid effectiveness agenda.

38. Regular reviews of overall United Nations capacity in consultation with the country, as was done in six "Delivering as One" pilot countries, may be useful tools to adapt human resource capacities at the country level, in support of UNDAF and other programming documents.

39. As part of such an integrated approach to human resources needs at the country level, it is important for national authorities and the United Nations to consider not only the services and expertise that should be provided from within the country, but also to draw on competencies available at headquarters or regional and subregional offices.

Mobilizing support from non-resident agencies

40. Not all members of the United Nations Development Group have the human and financial resources to decentralize technical, managerial and administrative capacity to the country level. Only UNICEF and UNDP are present in almost all programme countries. Non-resident agencies have been addressing how they might participate more fully in UNDAF and joint programming processes at the country level (see the report of the Secretary-General (E/2008/60)) as they have critical capacity to respond to governmental priorities. For instance, field-level support to trade policy and entrepreneurship is affected because UNCTAD, ILO, the

International Trade Centre and UNIDO — the United Nations entities with direct responsibility for these issues — are largely headquarters entities and have limited representation at the country level. The General Assembly has repeatedly called for enabling programme countries to benefit from the full range of resources available within the United Nations development system, including from agencies with limited or no country presence.

41. An early assessment of the 2007 pilot phase of the implementation of the United Nations Development Group plan to support the engagement of non-resident agencies in country-level activities revealed that there are a number of obstacles such as ad hoc flows of communication and coordination difficulties for both resident and non-resident agencies. As of today, 10 positions have been filled out of 14 full-time positions of non-resident agency coordination officers funded by UNDP (National Professional Officers). In January 2009, the United Nations Development Group endorsed the non-resident agency workplan for 2009-2011. The plan aims to enhance the engagement of non-resident agencies in country programming processes and improve the access of United Nations country teams to the expertise and experience of non-resident agencies. At the same time, the non-resident agencies need to put in place the necessary mechanisms to respond in a timely and effective way to the requests for support from country offices.

Regional and subregional levels

42. Increasingly, regional and subregional offices of United Nations system organizations have the technical capacity to support country offices in designing and implementing UNDAF and other programmes. Regional directors teams have also emerged as a new formal mechanism in the context of United Nations reform. There are six in total. Regional director teams are tasked with: (a) technical support to resident coordinators and United Nations country teams; (b) quality support assurance of UNDAF and delivering as one programmes; (c) performance management of the resident coordinators and United Nations country teams; and (d) helping United Nations country teams with trouble shooting. The capacity of regional directors' teams is being reviewed in the light of the expectations placed upon them.

Box 2

System-wide institutional mechanisms in the area of human resources management

Several formal structures are at the core of the United Nations system's human resources management. ICSC is at the centre of this institutional framework.

International Civil Service Commission

ICSC is a regulatory and coordinating body addressing compensation and conditions of service of the United Nations common system. Its ultimate purpose is to strengthen the coherence and effectiveness of the international civil service.

Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the High-level Committee on Management

CEB brings together the executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system, under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Human resources management issues affecting the development programmes of the United Nations system have high priority on the agenda of CEB.

CEB is supported in human resources issues by the High-Level Committee on Management, which is responsible for coherent, efficient and cost-effective management across United Nations system organizations. The Committee, assisted by the Human Resources Network (http://hr.unsystemceb.org/), addresses key policy issues that can foster greater coherence and cohesiveness at the country level.

Human Resources Network

The Human Resources Network offers advice to individual chief executives on best practices in human resources management, including policy matters. Issues regarding pay and benefits, competency-based recruitment, work-family agenda, inter-agency mobility, learning and training and career management are constantly under review.

United Nations Development Group and United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office

The United Nations Development Group, supported by the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office, develops measures to improve strategic and operational coherence of the United Nations development system at the country level, including in the area of human resources, on which it works closely with the High-Level Committee on Management. It also develops policies and procedures for the management of the resident coordinator system. The United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office also coordinates the appointment of resident coordinators through the Inter-Agency Advisory Panel.

B. Challenges linked to the recruitment and career management of United Nations system staff

43. This section highlights (a) examples of comprehensive human resource policies and strategies adopted by organizations of the United Nations system; (b) human resource issues specific to staff involved in coordination activities; (c) issues related to National Professional Officers; (d) other national personnel of the United Nations system; and (e) training.

1. Comprehensive human resources policies

44. In order to respond to the needs of programme countries and other Member States, organizations of the United Nations system have been increasingly moving towards comprehensive human resources policies. Those include components of

"talent management" strategies which use the full range of measures in the area of human resource management (recruitment, training, career development, performance management, and so forth) to arrive at the best mix of skills for delivering on their programmes and supporting programme countries. A few organizations have also undertaken "re-profiling" strategies. While there is no clear definition of such strategies, they similarly involve a determined effort to plan the recruitment, succession, career management and training of staff with a view to adjusting the skills, composition, functional and geographical repartition of the overall workforce. A few examples follow.

45. As part of its 2008 restructuring, the UNFPA human resources strategy sets transformational goals that address the culture of the organization and support the fulfilment of its mandate. The strategy identifies an integrated, holistic framework for the management of human resources in UNFPA that bases all human resources systems on an organizational competency framework; links performance management to the achievement of organizational results, including feedback on individual performance by a range of raters (360-degree assessment); incorporates "learning programmes" into staff development; and introduces the notion of career management and planning. The UNFPA career management system is based on the identification of career streams for the functional areas of the organization, and the development of learning programmes in these functional areas, so as to allow progression of staff along the various designated career streams. A new learning programme has been launched for mid-level managers with a view to strengthening their managerial competence and leadership skills. The restructuring also entailed the establishment of regional and subregional offices to provide integrated programmatic and technical support to country offices. A restructuring has also been undertaken at headquarters. Guidelines were established to support the restructuring effort to ensure a smooth transition. The Fund strengthened human resources in country offices through periodic competency-based recruitment drives for representatives and deputy representatives to obtain the talents required to play a more strategic role at country level. UNFPA has institutionalized its rotation policy and a corresponding annual rotation exercise to ensure staff mobility and better match skills to the requirements of posts.

46. Given its extensive country office network, UNDP has developed a new People-Centred Strategy for Managing Human Resources (2008-2011), with a focus on human resources management at the country level. In the interest of strengthened talent management — that is, getting the right person in the right job — UNDP is gradually moving from a "post" to a "pools" approach. This means shifting from recruiting for individual posts to creating pools of qualified candidates ("talent pools") along functional lines for all rotational posts up to the level of country directors. This is expected to allow for timely recruitment and smoother succession planning. There will be a thorough vetting process for entering into the pool. The UNDP competency framework forms the basis of this new talent management system. The competency framework was launched last year as a guide for helping managers and staff to understand what behaviours and skills are expected of them in their respective roles. UNDP is also launching leadership training for supervisors at all management levels, junior, middle and senior, including a mentoring programme for managers.

47. UNICEF is adjusting staff profiles to include social and economic policy analysis and rights-based programming while ensuring that long-standing staff

capacity in health, nutrition, education, water and sanitation will be ready to support country efforts. It has shifted towards a functional approach aimed at developing talents across functional/occupational areas such as HIV/AIDS, child survival, social policy, operations, human resources, and so forth, dictated by the needs of the organization. It has started the process of building pools of people with such talents for both internal (as a succession measure) and external candidates. Its New and Emerging Talent Initiative focuses on attracting, selecting, developing and retaining new external talent from entry- to mid-career levels with the ultimate goal of meeting the current and future needs of UNICEF. The initiative is associated with intense training and mentoring. Mobility has given to the organization the flexibility to deploy the right mix of skills and competencies to manage its various programme needs. A number of leadership programmes are being implemented.

48. FAO launched a major reform for "FAO Renewal", entailing the identification of new strategic objectives. Full introduction of results-based management is one of the priorities in the plan. The decentralization of FAO will be strengthened, and accompanied by delegation of authority with accountability. Decentralized offices will be specifically tailored to the needs of individual countries and regions, with a rationalized coverage based notably on developmental impact at the country level being considered. An incentive-based rotation policy between headquarters and decentralized offices is under elaboration. Reporting relationships are being redesigned to help the FAO Heads of Decentralized Office lead the organization's response to evolving country and subregional priorities. An information and knowledge strategy is being prepared to help to ensure unity of purpose in a networked and decentralized organization. The composition of staffing in regional and subregional offices will be adjusted in line with priority needs. Staff training on results-based management, revised delegations, as well as technical areas, is being strengthened.

49. WHO has undertaken a pilot project on staff re-profiling in three countries of the African region. This exercise had resulted in the reorientation and restructuring of WHO country offices in the region and recruitment for higher-level posts with longer duration of service at the country level.

2. Issues specific to staff involved in coordination

50. The quality and quantity of human resources required to adequately support programme countries are so broad that it is imperative for United Nations system organizations to work closely together in delivering operational activities. Specific human resources issues, however, arise for the personnel in charge of coordination, in particular the resident coordinator and the United Nations country team.

Resident coordinators

51. As reaffirmed by the General Assembly in resolution 62/208, the resident coordinator has the central role in making possible coordination of United Nations system operational activities for development at the country level. He or she ensures that they effectively respond to national priorities of the respective countries (resolution 62/208, para. 90).

52. In paragraph 102 of resolution 62/208, the General Assembly called upon the Secretary-General to improve the transparency and competitiveness of the recruitment processes for senior high-level posts in the United Nations development

system in order to find the best candidates both inside and outside the system, and ensure that gender and geographical balance are taken into account. It also encouraged efforts by the United Nations development system to improve the selection and training process of resident coordinators (para. 94).

53. The recruitment and selection processes of resident coordinators have been under continuous improvement through measures to promote a rigorous, transparent, objective and inclusive system to ensure quality of candidates as well as greater diversity among sitting resident coordinators.

54. A balance has now been achieved between resident coordinators from the North and the South, with the South accounting for 51 per cent of the sitting resident coordinators in 2008 as compared to 46 per cent in 2004 (see table 2 below). Achieving gender balance remains a challenge, although in 2008 there has been an improvement with women comprising 31 per cent resident coordinators, up from 26 per cent in 2004. In 2008, resident coordinators from non-UNDP organizations comprised 33 per cent of resident coordinators, compared to 27 per cent in 2004. UNDP has committed to ensuring that, by 2011, 40 per cent of the resident coordinators will be recruited from other United Nations organizations.

Table 2
Distribution of resident coordinators by agency affiliation, sex and geographic origin or nationality

		Agency affiliation						*Sex*				*Geographic origin or nationality*			
Year	*Total number of resident coordinators*[a]	*UNDP*	*Percentage*	*Other Excom*	*Percentage*	*Specialized agencies, non-resident agencies*	*Percentage*	*Female*	*Percentage*	*Male*	*Percentage*	*North*	*Percentage*	*South*	*Percentage*
2008	121	81	67	15	12	25	21	38	31	83	69	59	49	62	51
2006	125	87	70	14	11	24	19	38	30	87	70	61	49	64	51
2004	125	91	73	9	7	25	20	32	26	93	74	67	54	58	46

Source: UNDP human resources statistics 2008.
[a] As at year-end.

Recruitment process

55. Potential resident coordinator candidates are put forward by their parent United Nations organizations to undertake an assessment by the resident coordinator assessment centre. The centre, run by an independent private contractor, conducts a comprehensive competency-based assessment of the potential candidates.

56. Successful candidates can then be nominated by United Nations organizations for vacant resident coordinator posts for consideration by an Inter-Agency Advisory Panel. The Panel, composed of human resources directors and senior management staff of participating agencies and chaired by the Director of the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office, reviews and recommends agency nominated candidates to be proposed to the Chair of the UNDG. Since 2000, the Panel mechanism has been strengthened through a more systematic and robust process, using stronger evidence to assess candidates, which includes the resident coordinator assessment centre data, and more recently, the resident coordinator performance appraisal ratings. The role of the Office for the Coordination of

Humanitarian Affairs, the Department of Safety and Security and the DPA are recognized in assessing the suitability of candidates for the posts of Humanitarian Coordinator and Designated Official for Security, respectively, as well as posts requiring explicit political skills and acumen.

57. The Inter-Agency Advisory Panel makes recommendations to the Chair of the United Nations Development Group, who then proposes candidates to the Secretary-General, for selection and appointment. The Secretary-General then seeks the accreditation of the host country, following which the resident coordinator is deployed.

58. While there is interest among mid-career staff in the Resident Coordinator post as a career option, there are a number of challenges. These include a perception that the incentive package is insufficient to create attractive conditions of service and the hesitations related to the functional and managerial complexity of the Resident Coordinator post.

59. There has been recently a decline in the number of candidates undertaking the resident coordinator assessment centre, as well as a reduction in the number of candidates in the resident coordinator pool[5] applying to resident coordinator vacancies. There is an urgent need for a larger pool of high-calibre candidates to be placed against Resident Coordinator posts. The United Nations Development Group accordingly launched the "Resident coordinator talent management initiative" in 2008-2009 as a major policy initiative to address this need in the short, medium and long term. Steps being considered include the development of an enhanced inter-agency mobility and incentives package, with a "right of return" to the parent agency. They also include targeted interventions to attract staff of specialized agencies and non-resident agencies as well as women and to better prepare them for the exam. A comprehensive action plan has been prepared, which is due to be presented to the United Nations Development Group for endorsement in mid-2009.

60. Another concern is identification and selection of suitable candidates for the humanitarian coordinator function, for which the existing pool of potential candidates is found inadequate. Thus, since 2006, there has been an effort to develop a stronger pool of potential humanitarian coordinators (which feeds into, and is a subset of, the resident coordinator pool) managed by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs under the auspices of the Inter-Agency Steering Committee.[6] Candidates from this humanitarian coordinator pool would be presented by the emergency relief coordinator for consideration for resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator positions or for Resident Coordinator posts in countries where humanitarian coordination is required.

61. In recognition of the expanded governance structure of the United Nations Development Group, the United Nations Development Group Advisory Group[7] in September 2008 suggested that the United Nations Development Group Chair brief

[5] The resident coordinator pool refers to an inter-agency roster of candidates who have successfully undertaken the resident coordinator assessment centre and are eligible to apply for Resident Coordinator posts.

[6] The Inter-Agency Steering Committee is the primary mechanism for inter-agency coordination of humanitarian assistance and includes both United Nations and non-United Nations entities.

[7] The newly constituted Advisory Group of the United Nations Development Group comprises 13 organizations of the United Nations system and advises the Chair of the United Nations Development Group on issues related to the management of the resident coordinator system.

the Advisory Group principals twice a year on the outcomes of the Inter-Agency Advisory Panel and appointments of new resident coordinators.

62. There is a need for commensurate human resources for the resident coordinator to carry out his or her function to coordinate the activities of organizations of the United Nations system at the country level. While UNDP and the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office provide funds to each resident coordinator office, in most cases this does not cover the cost of the necessary staff support for the resident coordinator office. Resident coordinators are able to raise additional funds at the country level on an ad hoc basis, including for the work of the United Nations country team. The Chair of the United Nations Development Group and non-resident agencies have repeatedly underlined that the office of the resident coordinator should be lean, and that its activities should be undertaken with the support of the United Nations system agencies (which requires that the necessary support mechanisms be in place in non-resident agencies). However, this does not fully suffice in some cases and a number of resident coordinator offices remain understaffed.

United Nations country teams

63. The United Nations country team ensures inter-agency coordination and decision-making at the country level. The main purpose of the country team is for individual agencies to plan and work together, as part of the resident coordinator system, to ensure the delivery of tangible results in support of the development agenda of the Government. The United Nations country team will ensure full participation of all other United Nations entities active in a given country in the decision-making process concerning strategic and programmatic issues.

Recruitment of heads of agencies at country level

64. Heads of agencies in the country are selected by their respective organizations in accordance with systems and sets of competencies specific to each organization. The practices for the recruitment of senior posts vary from organization to organization. In most cases, vacancies are issued internally and externally. A few organizations advertise such posts internally only. Most organizations conduct interviews and several organizations such as ILO, UNESCO, UNIDO and UNFPA use assessment centres as well. In most cases, the Director-General/Executive Head takes the final decision on D-1/D-2 posts. The High-Level Committee on Management will consider recruitment practices for senior posts and take steps for their possible harmonization. To ensure that the best talents are made available to United Nations country teams, there is a need to reach out to senior staff both within and outside organizations of the United Nations system in recruiting for senior-level posts in programme countries.

3. National Professional Officers and other United Nations system personnel in the countries

National Professional Officers

65. The General Assembly, in paragraph 127 of its resolution 62/208, highlighted the importance of the use of National Professional Officers (NPO) and national consultants. National Professional Officers work under ICSC guidelines. The criteria established for this category of staff include: (a) the work should have a

national content, requiring national knowledge and experience; (b) NPOs should be nationals of the country in which they serve and should not be subject to reassignment to any duty station outside of the home country; (c) NPO posts should be graded on the basis of the standards used for classifying Professional posts; and (d) conditions of service should be established in accordance with the principle of the best prevailing conditions in the locality for nationals carrying out functions at the same or similar level, through the application of the NPO salary survey methodology promulgated by ICSC.[8]

66. National Professional Officers are an extremely valuable component of the staff of the United Nations system. Their specific substantive, institutional, linguistic and cultural knowledge enables United Nations organizations to achieve greater relevance and continuity in the field. National Professional Officers also play a unique role in capacity-building.

67. Efficient recruitment and training of national staff is important. UNFPA has been facing difficulties in recruiting and retaining national staff as operations managers, owing to the competition from other organizations. Those posts of operations managers have been converted to international posts and a number of national operations managers competed successfully for international operational managers' posts in other countries or regions. Issues related to career development of National Professional Officers also need to be addressed. For instance, national professional staff is considered internal candidate for international professional posts in UNDP. UNDP has adopted policies to train and coach national staff for international and regional assignments.

68. ICSC is currently reviewing the contracts and associated benefits of National Professional Officers to assess their degree of harmonization. An equitable system of compensation for National Professional Officers is necessary to attract and retain the best quality staff at the country level.

69. At the end of 2004, UNICEF had the largest number of National Professional Officers, with 1,523 staff members. UNDP had the second-largest complement, with 832 National Professional Officers, followed by WFP (267), WHO (248) and UNFPA (228).[9] Among the regional commissions, the Economic Commission for Africa has hired a growing number of National Professional Officers. Female representation is relatively low for this category of professionals.

United Nations Volunteers

70. While not considered staff of the United Nations, United Nations Volunteers are covered under United Nations security measures and enjoy non-monetary entitlements akin to those of United Nations staff. In 2008 some 7,700 United Nations Volunteers in 132 countries provided support to United Nations efforts towards peace and development. These United Nations Volunteers are experienced professionals with an average age of 37. In 2008, 34 per cent of the United Nations

[8] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 30* (A/61/30), annex IX.

[9] The present report uses the CEB compendium of statistics on national professional staff in 2004 for cross-organizational comparison. Increase in the number of National Professional Officers is reported by some agencies. UNFPA for instance reported 268 National Professional Officers in 2009.

Volunteers were deployed in their own country, with 48 per cent in Africa. Almost 80 per cent of them came from developing countries, with 46 per cent from Africa. In 2008, some 42 per cent of fielded United Nations Volunteers were deployed in peacekeeping operations or in humanitarian relief activities. The speed and flexibility of volunteer deployment makes them a valuable resource to address capacity gaps in emergencies or at times of peak requirements. Their frequent deployment at the grass-roots and community levels supports decentralized capacity transfer and promotes local ownership.

4. Training

Current trends

71. In paragraph 126 of resolution 62/208, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue and intensify training and skills upgrading of staff, notably at the United Nations System Staff College at Turin, Italy.

72. Training is essential to enable staff to adapt to the evolving external global and national environment or to evolutions in knowledge and technology, and "retools" them to function to the best of their capacity. It is also crucial in the context of United Nations and organizational reform to help staff to adjust their knowledge and attitudes to the new profile and substantive and programmatic priorities of the organizations.

73. As illustrated in earlier sections, organizations of the United Nations system are providing a range of skills and knowledge development programmes, geared towards increasing both the technical and managerial competencies of the staff.

74. There is a trend towards linking training to competencies identified by the organizations for guiding the process of recruitment and performance management. Training is also increasingly looked at in the context of functional networks created within a few organizations among staff with similar functions and substantive job contents. Management training, also involving field staff, is taking on increased importance. Change management training is also being gradually introduced. Other areas of training relate to orientation and induction, programme, operations, including work processes management, administration, budget and information and communications technology. Mandatory online training has been introduced in such areas as ethics, security and workplace harassment.

75. The United Nations Development Group has decided to look at ways to ensure greater accessibility of the training and learning resources of United Nations entities to staff across the system. This would allow the organizations to maximize the range of training opportunities available to United Nations system staff members and to positively impact on staff mobility. Some organizations, such as UNIDO, already utilize the expertise of other organizations, such as UNDP, to train their staff in programme countries.

76. Growing use is being made of information and communications technology and online tools to support training and knowledge development of United Nations personnel in the field. The United Nations Development Group website makes available programming and change management tools and learning resources for United Nations country teams. One example is the United Nations Development Group Toolkit for the improved functioning of the United Nations development system at the country level. UNIDO recently launched online training in

procurement. UNFPA and the University of Costa Rica developed a distance-learning course on population, which was taken by the vast majority of UNFPA staff. A certification course in finance has also been developed jointly by UNDP and UNFPA. FAO has a programme of work dedicated to harmonizing knowledge-sharing methodologies and promoting best practices in knowledge-sharing.

United Nations System Staff College

77. The objective of the United Nations System Staff College is to serve as a system-wide, knowledge-management and learning institution with a focus on inter-agency collaboration and operational effectiveness. It aims to develop a common system-wide leadership and management culture and promotes cohesion within the United Nations system. The focus of the Staff College programmes is on peace and security, development cooperation and United Nations system learning and training services. Strengthening the resident coordinator system is a priority of the Staff College activities. Table 3 shows that training in support of resident coordinator and United Nations country teams accounted for the majority of activities offered by the Staff College during the period 2006-2008. For instance, in 2008 90 per cent of all Staff College participants were trained on topics related to the resident coordinator system or United Nations country teams.

78. The Staff College invests in the continued growth of inter-agency knowledge networks in the areas of conflict prevention, safety and security, development cooperation and learning management. Its activities have resulted in enhanced competencies of United Nations staff involved in managing and/or supporting learning processes across the United Nations system, including at the country level. Other Staff College-supported regional and thematic networks include: the UNDAF/Common Country Assessment Facilitators Network, the UNDAF Quality Support and Assurance Group and the alumni of United Nations country team coordination and leadership workshops.

Table 3
United Nations System Staff College: activities in support of resident coordinators and United Nations country teams, organized from 2006 to 2008

Programme focus of the course	*Year*	*Number of workshops*	*Total number of participants*	*Number of male participants*	*Number of female participants*
All United Nations System Staff College training courses	2006	79	3 425	1 668	1 757
	2007	98	4 032	2 439	1 593
	2008	238	8 032	4 102	3 930
Support to resident coordinators and United Nations country teams	2006	52	2 752	1 550	1 202
	2007	73	3 301	1 999	1 302
	2008	214	7 253	3 672	3 581
Support to resident coordinators/country teams/all courses	2006	66%	80%	93%	68%
	2007	74%	82%	82%	82%
	2008	90%	90%	90%	91%

Source: United Nations System Staff College data in 2009.

Training of resident coordinators

79. The training of resident coordinators has progressively become more comprehensive and includes both newer and wider areas of knowledge and functional skills. It is more integrated within the framework of performance appraisal and competency development. It has also become more inclusive, involving contributions by specialized and non-resident agencies and other United Nations entities to promote knowledge of the United Nations system, collective leadership and a team spirit. Systematic coordination is also established with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department of Safety and Security to streamline the resident coordinator training with the humanitarian coordinator and training for designated officials for security.

80. Since 2006, the resident coordinator induction programme was redesigned. The resident coordinator training package administered by the United Nations Development Group in close cooperation with the United Nations System Staff College consists of (a) resident coordinator orientation (for individual resident coordinators prior to arrival in country); (b) resident coordinator induction (two-week group training in three phases on resident coordinator knowledge areas and functional skills; management skills; and agency briefings); (c) resident coordinator in-service training (focus on United Nations reforms and select substantive topics); (d) women's leadership programme; and (e) the resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator/designated officials/Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General package (online handbook).

81. The resident coordinator induction training addresses aspects related to the multiple roles of the resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator/designated officials, and develops the skills required for these roles. Recognizing the need for resident coordinators to have appropriate skills in complex, conflict-sensitive country situations; political acumen and sensitivity, strategic thinking, negotiation skills and consensus-building have been introduced as part of the training.

82. In 2007, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs launched a leadership development programme on humanitarian coordination for resident coordinators and resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinators, including the conduct of five regional workshops to familiarize them with their roles and responsibilities in this area, in cooperation with other partners. In 2009, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs with other agencies conducted a workshop on using international and national legal frameworks when working with Governments and non-State actors. The Department of Safety and Security organizes separate security briefings at headquarters for first-time resident coordinators.

83. As a result of the expanded induction programme, its duration has extended from two weeks (in 2005) to five weeks (in 2008) on a staggered basis, thus increasing the cost of training. United Nations system agencies based in Europe have agreed to cost-share some additional costs in 2008, but sustainable arrangements will have to be agreed upon for future trainings.

C. The challenge of planning for the succession of retiring staff members

84. Around 55-60 per cent of the Professional staff of selected United Nations Development Group organizations at both headquarters and other established offices is over 45 years old (see table 4). A substantial segment of the workforce is already relatively close to retirement age.

85. Very generally, organizations with larger operational activities and an extensive network of field offices tend to have younger Professional level staff, whereas others with a high technical orientation and/or regulatory or normative work have older Professional staff. The percentage of the Professional staff over 50 is about 26 per cent for UNICEF, 28 per cent for WFP, 32 per cent for UNDP, 43 per cent for WHO and 49 per cent for UNFPA (see table 4).

86. With the upcoming numbers of retirements, there may be a risk of losing valuable expertise and institutional memory unless due attention is paid to forward-looking planning and replacement strategies. The upcoming demographic transition of the United Nations system will also present opportunities to rejuvenate staff working on operational activities and hire staff equipped with skills adequate to responding to current requirements.

87. Recruitment and retention of young Professionals, however, continues to be a challenge across the system. Its organizations compete against other international or regional organizations and non-governmental organizations. The age of entry on duty is relatively high, which reflects the low number of junior posts in the United Nations system. The Joint Inspection Unit, in a 2007 report entitled "Age structure of human resources in the organizations of the United Nations system" (A/62/628), pointed to the urgent need to strengthen the career development and long-term prospects of younger Professional staff. The Leadership Development Programme and the Talent Management Programme of UNDP, and the Young Professional Programme of UNICEF were identified as good examples. Comprehensive career development programmes have also been elaborated and introduced in UNESCO, ILO, UNFPA and WHO.

88. The 2007 Joint Inspection Unit report also pointed to the need for organizations to implement "succession planning" as a human resource tool, noting that this practice is implemented in very few organizations. Succession planning efforts should identify competencies and critical needs available in the whole organization; give high potential staff challenging and career developing assignments in addition to formal training courses; address organization-specific human resources challenges such as ensuring gender and geographical balance; and facilitate the retention of skilled, qualified staff members. As shown in section B above, United Nations organizations already address some aspects of such succession planning. UNDP for instance will give special attention to succession planning as part of its ongoing strategic plan. UNFPA also developed a comprehensive succession planning framework that will have implications for recruitment, staff development and career management.

Table 4
Age distribution of Professional staff at headquarters and other established offices of 10 selected United Nations Development Group member organizations, as at 31 December 2007

	Age of staff								
Organization	*Less than 30 years*	*30-34 years*	*35-39 years*	*40-44 years*	*45-49 years*	*50-54 years*	*55-59 years*	*60-64 years*	*65 years and older*
UNDP	79	276	273	303	348	321	238	47	0
Age group/total (percentage)	4.19	14.64	14.48	16.07	18.46	17.03	12.63	2.49	0.00
UNICEF	66	233	306	294	287	225	146	35	1
Age group/total (percentage)	4.14	14.63	19.21	18.46	18.02	14.12	9.17	2.20	0.06
UNFPA	13	71	50	54	64	109	100	29	1
Age group/total (percentage)	2.65	14.46	10.18	11.00	13.03	22.20	20.37	5.91	0.20
WFP	29	180	231	252	268	226	115	31	1
Age group/total (percentage)	2.18	13.50	17.33	18.90	20.11	16.95	8.63	2.33	0.08
WHO	19	134	248	278	337	353	335	76	2
Age group/total (percentage)	1.07	7.52	13.92	15.60	18.91	19.81	18.80	4.26	0.11
IFAD[a]	7	26	42	40	55	51	33	8	0
Age group/total (percentage)	2.67	9.92	16.03	15.27	20.99	19.47	12.60	3.05	0.00
UNESCO	25	108	132	152	124	162	222	68	1
Age group/total (percentage)	2.52	10.87	13.28	15.29	12.47	16.30	22.33	6.84	0.10
FAO	11	88	128	169	210	282	268	114	1
Age group/total (percentage)	0.87	6.92	10.07	13.30	16.52	22.19	21.09	8.97	0.08
UNIDO	5	14	25	36	35	50	57	15	0
Age group/total (percentage)	2.11	5.91	10.55	15.19	14.77	21.10	24.05	6.33	0.00
ILO	2	30	63	99	110	166	147	49	2
Age group/total (percentage)	0.30	4.49	9.43	14.82	16.47	24.85	22.01	7.34	0.30
Average (percentage)	**2.43**	**11.03**	**14.24**	**15.95**	**17.48**	**18.50**	**15.79**	**4.49**	**0.09**

Source: Chief Executives Board for Coordination, High-level Committee on Management, personnel statistics data, as at 31 December 2007.

[a] IFAD is not precisely a part of the common system, but it has chosen to follow the common system.

D. Challenges associated with dealing with multiple human resources policies and procedures across the system

89. The diversity in human resources policies and procedures across the system is a concern for staff and non-staff personnel. Colleagues may work side-by-side delivering similar tasks under very different conditions of service. Lack of harmonization of human resources policies and regulations also impedes closer cooperation in many country offices and hinders the move towards the more effective, efficient and coherent United Nations system envisioned by the General Assembly in resolution 62/208. The present section addresses (a) measures planned by CEB to harmonize human resources polices and procedures; (b) issues related to the diversity of contractual status; and (c) inter-agency and geographical mobility.

1. Chief Executives Board for Coordination plan of action towards harmonizing human resources management policies and procedures across the United Nations system

90. The General Assembly, in its resolution 62/208, recognized the importance of harmonizing human resources management. The plan of action for the harmonization of business practices of organizations of the United Nations system adopted by CEB in response to that resolution aims, among others, to make human resources policies and procedures consistent across the system. It should result in facilitating mobility between organizations, simplifying processes and increasing efficiency. The plan will also increase the integration of field staff into the organizations. One element of the plan is to conduct a study of the staff regulations and staff rules of the organizations of the United Nations common system, with a view to identifying areas where harmonization may be called for. The study is co-sponsored by ICSC. Extrabudgetary resources are needed for the full implementation of the CEB plan.

91. The DaO initiative has also opened up a number of issues related to human resources. Pending the evaluation of this initiative, some issues will be considered by the High-level Committee on Management for possible wider applicability, including the harmonization of different contract modalities, post classification in various agencies and performance assessment systems.

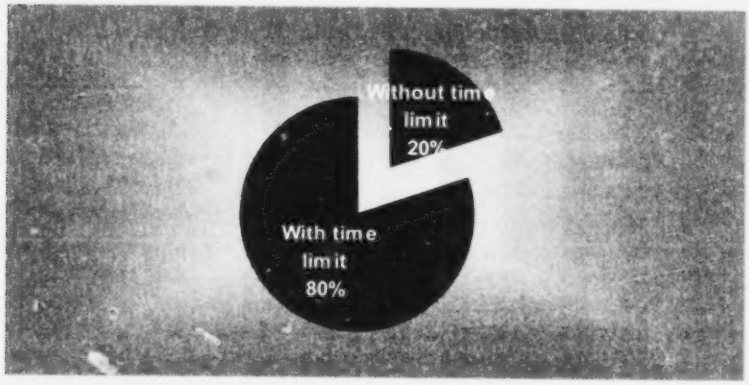
2. Diversity of contractual status

Variation in the types of appointments among United Nations staff

92. The staff of the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies and among the staff of the United Nations Secretariat work under multiple types of appointments.

Figure I

Type of appointments for Professional staff of 10 selected member organizations of the United Nations Development Group, as at 31 December 2007 (headquarters and other established offices)



Source: Chief Executives Board for Coordination, High-level Committee on Management, personnel statistics data, as at 31 December 2007, based on table 6.

Table 5

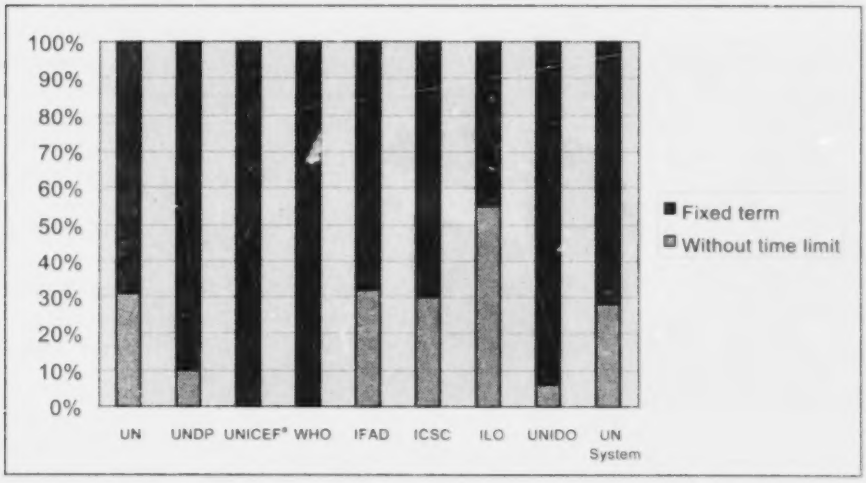
Professional staff at headquarters and established offices of selected member organizations of the United Nations Development Group by type of appointment, as at 31 December 2007

	Without time limit, including permanent staff		*Fixed-term staff*		
Organization	*Number of Professional staff*	*Total Professional staff (percentage)*	*Number of Professional staff*	*Total Professional staff (percentage)*	*Total number of Professional staff*
UNDP	193	10	1 692	90	1 885
UNICEF	0	0	1 593	100	1 593
UNFPA	64	13	427	87	491
WFP	689	52	644	48	1 333
WHO	1	0	1 781	100	1 782
IFAD	84	32	178	68	262
UNESCO	21	2	973	98	994
FAO	649	51	622	49	1 271
UNIDO	15	6	222	94	237
ILO	368	55	300	45	668
Total/average	**2 084**	**20**	**8 432**	**80**	**10 516**

Source: Chief Executives Board for Coordination, High-level Committee on Management, personnel statistics data, as at 31 December 2007.

Figure II

Type of Professional staff appointment for the United Nations common system, as at 31 December 2007 (headquarters and other established offices)



Source: Chief Executives Board for Coordination, High-level Committee on Management, personnel statistics data, as at 31 December 2007.

* UNICEF reports that it also has staff with fixed-term contracts, although this does not appear as such in the CEB compendium, owing to definitional issues.

93. For the 10 selected member organizations of the United Nations Development Group above, the majority (80 per cent) of Professional staff at headquarters and other established offices is on fixed-term contracts or "contracts with time limits". Only 20 per cent of staff in those United Nations Development Group organizations has "contracts without time limits" at the end of December 2007 (see figure I and table 5). The percentage of personnel with contracts "without time limits" (including permanent contracts) ranges from 0 per cent for WHO to 55 per cent for ILO, 52 per cent for WFP, and 51 per cent for FAO (see figure II).

94. The flexibility allowed by having staff on contract with time limits may be an important strategic advantage in being able to provide the "right skills at the right time in the right place" and to facilitate prompt response to the requirements and crises of developing countries. Yet it also raises the question of job security of United Nations system staff who often work for long periods of time under such contractual arrangements with the expectation of continuation of employment.

95. Streamlining contractual modalities has been a persistent challenge to United Nations Development Group member organizations. As stated above, today, in country offices and headquarters locations, staff members work closely together to deliver different aspects of the overall United Nations support, often under a number of different contractual arrangements. This has led to dissatisfaction among staff, owing to perceived unequal treatment. The existing variation in contracts among various organizations can also make inter-agency mobility more complicated. From an administrative point of view, varied contractual arrangements, each with different conditions of service and benefits, can lead to complex and time-consuming administrative work in the various offices concerned.

Recent harmonization of contractual arrangements in the United Nations

96. The reform proposals of the United Nations Secretary-General, approved by the General Assembly in resolution 63/250, entail replacing the current various contractual arrangements existing within the United Nations Secretariat with one single set of Staff Rules (based on the current 100 series), and three types of appointments based on the duration of appointment starting from 1 July 2009. The three types of appointments are: temporary, fixed-term and continuing. The duration of appointment to be offered will be determined in accordance with organizational needs.

97. The reform will further enhance transparency in the recruitment process, reduce inequality in conditions of service and facilitate the career progression of United Nations staff members. It will align closely the conditions of service of staff in the field with those applied at the level of the common system. The reform recognizes that the United Nations needs a truly integrated field-oriented and global workforce that will better serve its operational mandates. The reform will also make it easier for entities to share staff resources through transfers and exchanges. This will increase the attractiveness of the United Nations to qualified personnel.

98. New Staff Regulations were approved by the General Assembly in March 2009. New Staff Rules are being prepared, which will be issued provisionally on 1 July 2009 and will be reviewed by the General Assembly at its next session.

99. The reform will apply to the Secretariat and the funds and programmes. Its implementation entails significant challenges, some of which may need to be addressed by the governing bodies of the funds and programmes. One challenge is to train United Nations country offices in using the new contractual modalities in recruiting new staff as well as administering current staff, given the short time frame for implementation. The challenge is particularly acute for UNDP, which also manages the personnel of a range of other entities.

100. The introduction of the "One United Nations Contract" responded to the recommendation made by ICSC to the General Assembly regarding the introduction of a contractual framework applicable to the whole common system. The General Assembly decision on the new contractual framework would be applicable to all United Nations system entities, provided it is endorsed by the respective governing bodies.

101. At the same time, the ongoing work on contractual frameworks does not impact on the even larger problem linked to the host of contract arrangements applicable to the broad number of non-staff members employed by United Nations system entities. CEB, as part of its plan of action, has decided to give the highest priority to a review of the various contract arrangements which exist in some member organizations.

3. Facilitating inter-agency and geographical mobility

Inter-agency mobility

102. Inter-agency mobility offers opportunities for cross-fertilization of professional experiences and career development, ultimately helping staff members to deliver more efficient support and better results at the country level. It is also key to promoting inter-organizational cooperation and coherence. In November 2005,

CEB issued a revised and more comprehensive policy on inter-agency mobility, providing the basis for greater harmonization in the United Nations common system. The policy clarifies the compensation and benefits for staff transferring or entering into an exchange agreement with another United Nations system organization. This framework ensures that staff can move across organizations, without interruption in compensation, benefits and eligibility for promotion. Data on inter-agency movements is not collated across the system. Therefore, it is not possible to determine the extent of inter-agency mobility or to track the impact of the revised policy.

103. Despite the availability of information on vacancies on the websites of all United Nations Development Group member organizations, and despite the fact that a policy is in place, there is a perception, particularly among staff, that inter-agency movement is relatively limited. One view is that because many United Nations entities are career organizations, they must find a balance between external recruitment and career development opportunities for internal staff.

104. From the point of view of staff, there are still some disincentives to mobility that should be addressed through proactive programmes. One important aspect is the different promotion and recruitment criteria in place in various organizations. For instance, the United Nations Secretariat does not count the number of years of experience in the same way as do the funds and programmes, which prevents some middle-level staff of the funds and programmes from joining the Secretariat. Without harmonization in this area, it will be hard to foster true inter-agency mobility. Harmonization of contractual status is also key to enabling mobility.

105. In response to demands from pilot countries, the United Nations Development Group has agreed to address the issue of inter-agency mobility. One positive example is the One UN Communication Team in Viet Nam, for which participating agencies plan to consider candidates from other organizations of the United Nations system as internal candidates (see box 3).

Box 3
The One UN Communication Team in Viet Nam

In Viet Nam, a joint thematic inter-agency cluster — the "One UN Communication Team" — was established. It comprises UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, United Nations Volunteers and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS. It has worked to ensure equitable grade levels among the members of the team, clear reporting lines (with agency members reporting directly to the Communication Team Manager yet maintaining linkages with their respective agency focal points), joint recruitment processes, joint job-classification exercises and agreement on using the UNFPA 360-degree feedback performance appraisal system for team members.

Posts will be advertised by respective funding agencies in accordance with their own human resources policies. It is planned that applicants from other agencies will be considered as internal candidates.

Geographical mobility

106. Organizations of the United Nations system have encouraged periodic rotation between the field and headquarters as well as between country offices. Such mobility helps to match the staff skills with the changing requirements in country offices. For the staff members, it offers the opportunity to acquire varied and diverse experience and learning. One issue, however, is that despite innovative programmes such as the spouse employment programme or "Dual employment and staff mobility programmes" (adopted by a large number of United Nations organizations), the lack of employment opportunities for spouses makes periodic mobility difficult for dual-career families. Several consecutive staff assignments to non-family duty stations may have negative consequences for families and for work-life balance. Challenges also include how to make the best use of competencies of staff at the field level when they return to headquarters, and how to ensure that they do not lose their technical expertise.

E. The challenge of ensuring staff security

107. United Nations personnel continue to be the target of deliberate attacks by extremists, armed groups, and disgruntled sections of the population in all areas of humanitarian and United Nations operations.

108. Key factors contributing to increased challenges for United Nations security worldwide include the expansion of United Nations system operations; rising criminality owing to deteriorating public security and the limited capacity of local authorities in countries facing economic, political and social tension; the spread of terrorism; as well as rising public expectations and local dissatisfaction with United Nations operations.

109. There is tension between ensuring that the United Nations delivers on its mandates and, at the same time, that delivery is carried out with a risk-management perspective. In this regard, the resident coordinator as designated official for security needs to be supported adequately at all levels of the United Nations system.

110. The security of office premises must also be assured. At a time when agencies are increasingly co-located into United Nations houses or are planning to co-locate, there is a clear understanding that this issue should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, factoring in the particular threats in a given country or region or specific location, the host Government's ability to protect as well as the specific profile of the programme.

111. In response to the Independent Panel on Safety of UN Personnel and Premises Worldwide,[10] CEB, at its spring session on 4 April 2009, endorsed the development of a comprehensive plan to strengthen security system-wide. The aim is to build a more flexible, more dynamic, and more resilient United Nations security management structure. While recognizing that there is no programme without security, and no security without resources, the plan would propose a shift of culture and mindset from a focus on "when to leave" to a focus on "how to stay". The plan

[10] Report of the Independent Panel on Safety of UN Personnel and Premises Worldwide entitled "Towards a culture of security and accountability", dated 9 June 2008. The Panel was established following the attack on 11 December 2007 against the United Nations in Algiers.

would promote a culture of mainstreaming security across all levels of the organization and entail measures such as, among others, increasing resources for staff safety and security, increasing liaison with the host country on security issues, and strengthening the security of national staff.

112. Since 2007, the United Nations System Staff College and the Department of Safety and Security have implemented a comprehensive approach to address the need for improved security and safety for United Nations staff operating in high-risk environments. The joint Safe and Secure Approaches in Field Environments programme provides the United Nations system with a standard safety and security learning curriculum. It also helps the United Nations country teams to tailor this curriculum to their different needs and implement it. The programme is currently running in 13 countries and has certified over 6,000 United Nations staff.

F. The challenge of ensuring equal representation of women

1. Representation of women in the Professional category

113. The General Assembly, in paragraph 66 of resolution 62/208, called upon the organizations of the United Nations development system to continue efforts to achieve gender balance in appointments within the United Nations system at all levels for positions that affect operational activities, including appointments of resident coordinators and other high-level posts, keeping in mind the principle of equitable geographical distribution.

114. Between 2004 and 2007, the percentage of women in various grades within organizations in the United Nations system increased slightly to 37.96 per cent of Professional staff members at the end of 2007, from 36.90 per cent at end-2004 (see table 6). The larger increase was achieved at the headquarters level, with female representation scaled up from 39.60 per cent in 2004 to 41.79 per cent in 2007. In contrast, at the end of 2007, representation of women at field duty stations was 34.21 per cent and that among project staff was 30.60 per cent. This may indicate a serious challenge for the Organization in attracting and retaining talented women at the field level.

Table 6
Professional staff of organizations in the United Nations common system by organizational location and percentage of female Professional staff, as at 31 December from 2004 to 2007

	Headquarters	*Other than headquarters-established offices (Field)*	*Project*	*All locations*
2004				
Total Professional staff	10 943	8 574	3 489	23 006
Female Professional staff	4 328	2 868	1 301	8 497
Female representation (percentage)	39.60	33.40	37.30	36.90
2005				
Professional staff	11 220	10 208	2 317	23 745

	Headquarters	*Other than headquarters-established offices (Field)*	*Project*	*All locations*
Female Professional staff	4 535	3 557	745	8 837
Female representation (percentage)	40.42	34.85	32.15	37.22
2006				
Professional staff	13 036	9 585	2 087	24 708
Female Professional staff	5 346	3 282	675	9 303
Female representation (percentage)	41.00	34.20	32.30	37.70
2007				
Professional staff	13 211	11 191	1 160	25 562
Female Professional staff	5 521	3 828	355	9 704
Female representation (percentage)	41.79	34.21	30.60	37.96
Change 2004-2007				
Percentage increase (decrease)	**2.19**	**0.81**	**(6.70)**	**1.06**

Source: Chief Executives Board for Coordination, High-level Committee on Management, personnel statistics data, as at 31 December 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007.

115. Only UNFPA achieved gender parity (52.14 per cent) in its Professional staff as at 31 December 2007. UNICEF is very close to achieving it. IFAD and UNESCO have over 45 per cent of women in their Professional staff; ILO, WFP and WHO have over 40 per cent (see table 7).

116. However, women account for a clear majority in the entry-level and lower Professional grades, although these numbers are relatively small with reference to total Professional staff. Representation of women in the Professional staff declines, with few exceptions, from grade P-3 (see figure III). For instance, in UNDP, at the end of 2008, women accounted for 42 per cent of all UNDP international Professional staff. The representation of women was 49 per cent for junior management, 38 per cent for middle-level and 36 per cent for senior management.[11] Although there is a steady progress, gender parity at the senior-level management is still a major challenge for almost all United Nations Development Group organizations.

[11] UNDP reporting to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in 2009.

Table 7

Number and percentage of female Professional staff by grade, of selected member organizations of the United Nations Development Group, as at 31 December 2007

Organization	*P-1*	*P-2*	*P-3*	*P-4*	*P-5*	*D-1*	*D-2*	*UG*[a]	*Total female Professional staff*
UNDP	14	147	124	174	169	77	19	7	731
Female representation in grade (percentage)	63.63	58.80	36.36	36.40	34.99	33.62	32.47	53.84	38.78
UNICEF	5	154	246	252	97	13	5	2	774
Female representation in grade (percentage)	33.33	64.17	48.14	47.55	39.43	37.14	38.46	66.67	48.59
UNFPA	1	42	29	61	92	23	5	3	256
Female representation in grade (percentage)	100.0	76.36	61.70	46.21	49.46	43.40	35.71	66.67	52.14
WFP	6	127	165	127	78	21	9	3	536
Female representation in grade (percentage)	75.0	52.48	39.18	39.44	36.62	25.30	23.08	60.0	40.21
WHO	6	82	148	253	184	44	13	7	737
Female representation in grade (percentage)	78.0	59.42	50.68	48.75	34.26	20.95	24.53	28.0	41.36
IFAD	2	24	41	24	19	6	1	1	118
Female representation in grade (percentage)	50.0	60.0	73.21	35.29	25.67	42.86	14.28	20.0	45.04
UNESCO	19	130	144	82	70	15	7	1	468
Female representation in grade (percentage)	76.0	59.63	55.38	40.39	38.89	22.39	25.0	7.69	47.08
FAO	4	81	117	99	68	15	5	2	391
Female representation in grade (percentage)	28.57	53.29	44.49	25.45	23.37	13.76	13.51	1.25	30.76
UNIDO	1	8	19	16	9	8	0	0	61
Female representation in grade (percentage)	100.0	50.0	30.64	31.37	12.68	26.67	0.0	0.0	25.74
ILO	0	13	59	91	71	30	6	4	274
Female representation in grade (percentage)	Not applicable	76.47	52.21	43.96	29.83	47.62	28.57	44.44	41.01

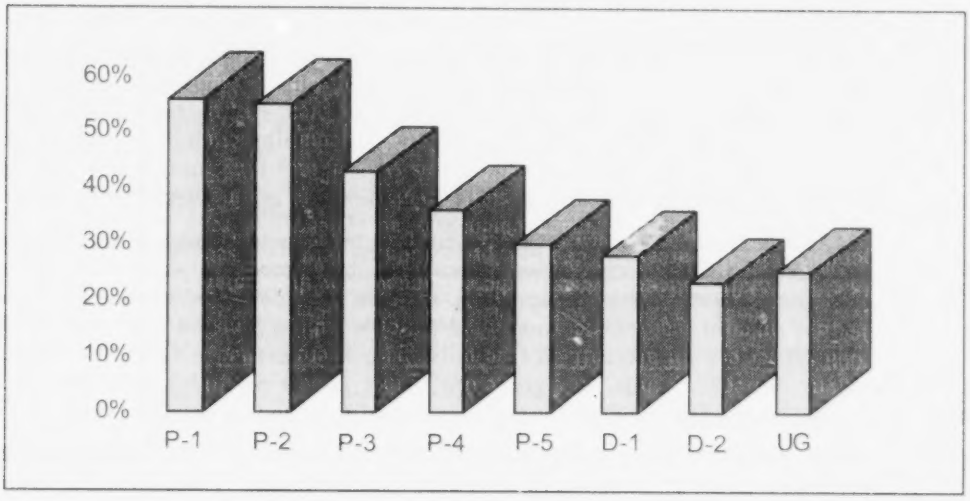
Source: Chief Executives Board for Coordination, High-level Committee on Management, personnel statistics data, as at 31 December 2007.

[a] For grade, please see the CEB definition on page 4 of the present report.

Figure III

Representation of women in the Professional staff of the United Nations common system, by grade, as at 31 December 2007

(Percentage)



Source: Chief Executives Board for Coordination, High-level Committee on Management, personnel statistics data, as at 31 December 2007.

2. Proactive strategies to promote the equitable representation of women

117. Various approaches are employed by United Nations Development Group organizations to increase the number of qualified female candidates and retain women Professionals.

118. The most frequently adopted plans include family leave, part-time work, special leave without pay and awareness measures against sexual exploitation. Some 15 organizations have also adopted a spouse employment policy. However, only a few organizations have adopted innovative measures such as job-sharing, target recruitment, and annual gender audits. There is need to enhance mechanisms to hold managers accountable for the decisions they make regarding establishing gender-balanced workplace.[12]

119. As a strategy to achieve gender parity, in 2008 the United Nations Development Group initiated the women's leadership development programme, which aimed at identifying challenges and proposing strategies for enhanced retention of women in leadership positions within the United Nations system. The programme, which comprises leadership training and mentoring, brought together 35 women resident coordinators to share their experiences and collectively design strategies for overcoming challenges that hinder their career advancement and

[12] The secretariat of ICSC has published an analytical report reviewing gender balance in the United Nations common system during the period from 1 January 2005 to 31 December 2006, based on CEB personnel statistics and a survey. The report also contains information on recent developments in policies and measures to achieve gender balance, as at January 2008 (ICSC/67/R.11).

retention within the United Nations system. Key recommendations of the programme will be implemented in 2009. More system-wide and targeted efforts (e.g., developing courses and/or training materials) will help to prepare candidates for potential resident coordinator assignments, particularly among qualified women and candidates from developing countries and the full range of United Nations organizations.

120. In UNDP, gender parity has been integrated in the corporate accountability and monitoring tools. UNDP instituted a "gender and diversity balance scorecard", which allows managers in headquarters and country offices to evaluate their progress in meeting targets regarding gender representation as well as creating an organizational climate that fosters gender equity. The UNDP Strategic Plan sets up the target of 50/50 gender parity by 2011 for all levels of international Professionals.

121. Some organizations use affirmative action to promote women to the D-1 and D-2 levels. UNICEF reports an increase in the number of women at senior management levels using this approach. In 2008, it achieved an increase of 7 per cent of women at the D-2 level and 6 per cent at the D-1 and L-6 levels. The UNICEF policy for recruitment is "two women for every three vacancies" where gender imbalance exists. The goal is to ensure gender parity by 2010. UNICEF offers a range of possibilities for adjusting work-life balance in country offices.

122. UNFPA (which has already achieved 50/50 gender parity) has a comprehensive policy to make UNFPA an attractive employer, and intensive efforts are being made to increase staff well-being (e.g., work-life balance) and create positive work environment.

123. WFP has a women leaders' group which focuses on improving the gender balance, in particular at the senior management level. The key elements of this programme are informal networking and a mentoring system to address barriers that women face in moving up the ladder to senior positions.

124. UNIDO developed a gender policy through staff/management consultations. The policy contains provisions for affirmative action and accountability.

125. ILO has adopted a holistic approach. Its human resources department and Gender Bureau have been working closely together to achieve gender parity by 2010. ILO has been making steady progress backed up by the 1999 policy on gender equality and mainstreaming. ILO has initiated a series of participatory gender audits in accordance with this policy, which was the first exercise of this kind to be introduced in the United Nations system.[13] The objective of the audits is to promote organizational learning on how to mainstream gender effectively, in the policies, programmes and structures of the institution.

126. Overall, retention of women is a major challenge to the United Nations system, especially at the field level and for organizations working in humanitarian and post-conflict situations. Family obligations often come into play. Dual-career families also face difficult challenges. In the future, individual measures taken by the various organizations should be harmonized and made more coherent.

[13] http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---gender/documents/publication/wcms_101030.pdf).

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

127. **The Economic and Social Council may wish to:**

(a) **Request organizations of the United Nations system to mobilize adequate human resources to support the development of new UNDAFs and invite donors to provide support in this regard;**

(b) **Request organizations of the United Nations system to adjust recruitment processes and to intensify efforts to identify qualified national and international staff to be placed on a roster of candidates for rapid deployment to situations of transition from relief to development;**

(c) **Call upon the United Nations Development Group and the United Nations System Staff College to further develop knowledge and training on capacity development, building on progress made thus far;**

(d) **Encourage the United Nations system to conduct, when appropriate, assessments of adequacy of human resources capacities in United Nations country teams to respond to the priorities in UNDAF or country programme documents;**

(e) **Request organizations of the United Nations system to support efforts by the United Nations Development Group to strengthen the capability of the United Nations system to attract, develop and retain suitable candidates for the post of resident coordinator;**

(f) **Request organizations of the United Nations system to make greater use of the United Nations System Staff College to train their staff, notably members of United Nations country teams;**

(g) **Encourage efforts by organizations of the United Nations system through the United Nations Development Group to make use of each other training facilities so as to maximize opportunities and substantive coverage of training offered to United Nations system staff, notably at the country level;**

(h) **Encourage the United Nations system through CEB and ICSC to continue efforts through the CEB plan of action to make human resources procedures coherent across the United Nations system, as a way to support coherence in the work of United Nations country teams. In particular, encourage measures to harmonize the contractual arrangements employed by various organizations and the different promotion and recruitment criteria as well as measures to address other obstacles to inter-agency mobility, taking full note of organizations' specific policies arising from their different mandates, the governing bodies and the uneven distribution of resources;**

(i) **In this regard, encourage Member States to support financially the CEB plan for the harmonization of business practices;**

(j) **Encourage CEB, in collaboration with ICSC, to pursue their work on harmonizing the conditions of service for National Professional Officers;**

(k) **Welcome the development by CEB of a comprehensive plan of action to strengthen security systems and encourage organizations of the United Nations system, in implementing the plan, to further consider the best way of delivering their programme while ensuring the security of their personnel;**

(l) Note the upcoming demographic transition of the United Nations system staff and underscore the need for strategic workforce planning to proactively support human resources needs of organizations of the United Nations system and their ability to respond to the priorities of programme countries;

(m) Encourage the United Nations system to intensify its efforts to achieve gender balance in appointments at the global, regional and country levels for positions that affect operational activities for development, including high-level (D-1 and D-2) and resident coordinator posts;

(n) Encourage ICSC, CEB and the United Nations system to promote further research on key human resources management issues to inform policy decisions in this area as well as to develop indicators to monitor the effectiveness of human resources management in the United Nations common system.